

THE  
ART  
OF  
LIVING in LONDON:  
A  
POEM.

*Pt. 2<sup>d</sup>*

THE  
T. H. T.  
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ART  
OF  
LIVING in LONDON:  
A  
POEM.

*Delectando, pariterque monendo. Hor.*  
*by James Smith. —*  
LONDON 1784.

Presented by

W. Musgrave.

1790

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THE  
ART of LIVING  
IN  
LONDON.

**I**N such a scribbling age where crowds conspire  
With eager haste to catch poetic fire;  
Where every anecdote of modern time,  
Breakes out in *novel*, or is sung in rhyme;  
Where all unite—the sprightly and the sage,  
To please the fickle palate of the age,  
How hard his task, who does not fear to tell  
He means instruction, more than writing well?

Still, if his vary'd lessons can impart  
One useful caution to a guardless heart;



If those, whom few paternal acres bless,  
 Be tutor'd not to make their little less;  
 If, pointing out an œconomic view,  
 He makes the thoughtless different steps pursue;  
 If, in this town, where folly holds her reign,  
 He saves but *one* of all her giddy train,  
 Th' effects are answer'd of these frugal lays:  
 He wants——nor asks——no other kind of praise.

Come then, advent'rous pupil, let's along,  
 This gay, this busy——strangely mottl'd throng;  
 Where crowds, like waves, in quick succession rise,  
 T' engage our thoughts, or entertain our eyes;  
 From their mistakes let's learn to form the mind,  
 And glean this useful point—TO KNOW MANKIND.  
 Suppose we call on PRUDENCE, as we pass,  
 That decent, sober, cheerful looking lass?  
 She'll point, precisely, to the lighter scale,  
 And set us right when both our judgments fail.

Near that fam'd *bar*, which bounds the City's claim,  
 And from the neighbouring *Temple* takes it's name,  
 (That

(That guardian dome from whence Britannia draws,  
 The numerous champions of her sacred laws)  
 Here may you lodge——This intermediate stand  
 The east, and western end, at once command.  
 What tho' it gives no variegated views,  
 Oft will it save your coach-hire, and your shoes,  
 Abridge the walk wherever you resort,  
 Or to the City end, or to the Court.

Let thoughtless pride fix her genteel retreat,  
 In some superb, expensive, modern street,  
 Where the stuff'd chair, and downy couch unite  
 The lazy arts of indolent delight ;  
 Despise not thou the chamber storied high——  
 Ev'n, tho' the last that verges to the sky ;  
 A first floor's often but an empty name,  
 Less for convenience taken than for fame.  
 Nay, never start at the suppos'd disgrace ;  
 Poets themselves have dignify'd the place ;  
 And from this higher station learn'd to scan  
 The various foibles of imperfect man.

When dreams are first disturb'd by morning cries,  
 Learn from those notes the proper time to rise ;  
 How often does prolong'd repose impart  
 Disorders fixt, beyond the reach of art ?  
 Ask gout the cause, why swells each throbbing vein ?  
 Why ev'ry joint is agoniz'd with pain ?  
 Ask poverty what keeps her children poor ?  
 Ask gloomy spleen, why she admits no cure ?  
 " 'Tis too much sleep"—(tho' we the cause miscall)  
 Is the reply—the just reply of all.

Leave to the loiterer his simp'ring tea,  
 Nor idly busy thus consume the day ;  
 'Ere bread, and butter, water, cream and fire,  
 (With all the long attendance they require)  
 Can be prepar'd—the useful morning's lost,  
 And ev'ry dish we drink at treble cost.  
 Taught from the picture, let us turn aside,  
 And know the breakfast Prudence would provide ;  
 She recommends—(and let her voice be heard)  
 That something much more simple be preferr'd,  
 As milk, or water-gruel—wholesome meal !  
 These pall no stomach—these no time will steal !

Tho'



Tho' some are advocates for well drest hair,  
 Let no such *etiquette* deserve your care ;  
 Act for yourself as much as in your pow'r,  
 Nor dance attendance to another's hour.  
 For shame, shall Britain's manly sons accede  
 To every flimsy fashion France has made ?  
 Shall we, like her, the head's exterior part  
 Adorn with all the fripperies of art,  
 Yet leave the inside desolate and waste ?  
 Reproachful scandal to all letter'd taste !  
 Above such imitative airs do you  
 More on yourself depend, and wear a *queue* ;  
 Hence to a moment, you your time command,  
 Nor need the fiat of a *friseur's* hand.

Alike avoid the miser's narrow care,  
 Which robs the shoe-black of his early fare ;  
 Perish the thought so niggard and so mean,  
 The Muse rejects it with a just disdain.  
 No—let some son of Fleet-street, or the Strand,  
 Some footy son, with implements at hand,  
 Who hourly watches with no other view,  
 Than to re-polish the bespattered shoe,

Earn by his labour the offensive gains ;  
Nor grudge the trifle that rewards his pains.

If business now should leave the morn your own,  
Ne'er waste it sauntering round this crouded town,  
Haunting each coffee-house and public place,  
As if you meant to advertise your face.  
This is the time when memory receives  
The warmest copies which instruction leaves ;  
Attention too performs a double part,  
And acts unclouded on the head and heart.  
Hence let some Author more your time engage ;  
Where, turning o'er th' improving moral page,  
You add such stores of knowledge to your mind,  
As teach you how to estimate mankind.  
With Maro, warble in the beachen shade,  
And feel the breeze, and hear the sweet cascade.  
From Newton catch the philosophic ray,  
And soar with him along the starry way.  
Now laugh with Swift, or moralize with Steele,  
Or from chaste Addison be taught to feel :  
Or learn from Pope, as he melodious sings,  
To scorn the vulgar great, and pity Kings.

If aught can make distinction here below,  
It surely should depend on what we know.

Yet tho' the mind our chief attention share,  
The body's *wants* demand an equal care :  
Let stoic pride in lofty numbers treat  
How these are made, yet all will want to *eat* ;  
And they, themselves, dissemble what they can,  
In this respect will dwindle into man.  
But tho' in this diffusive town you meet  
So many ord'naries in every street,  
(For oh ! of dining what unnumber'd styles,  
Centre between Almac's and Broad St. Giles !)  
Yet amidst these——how difficult to tell,  
Where frugal men may live, and yet live well !

Behind that pile\* where Albion's sons resort,  
And pay to Commerce every day their court ;  
Who, like a gracious prince's ne'er denies  
To grant to industry the due supplies,  
There stands a steak-house of distinguish'd fame,  
The sign the *Cock*—*Threadneedle*-street's the name.

\* Royal Exchange.

Whose



Whose civil landlord, with his smiling face,  
 Proclaims the gen'ral plenty of the place.  
 If e'er beef-steaks, drest to a single point,  
 Cut with propriety from every joint,  
 With all the apparatus they require,  
 Of constant turning, and an equal fire.  
 The gravy weeping from each op'ning vein,  
 And streaks of fat opposing streaks of lean.  
 Could ever pleasure Aldermanic skill,  
 Here let it revel, and enjoy its fill.

With different talents different men are blest,  
 As they of different fortunes are possess'd :  
 Some men are form'd to turn the letter'd page,  
 To charm, refine, or satirize the age ;  
 Others remain inactive—save to tell  
 The modes of dress, or arts of *bagatelle* ;  
 But thou wert born, O B—l—r to feast,  
 By thy peculiar art, the man of taste ;  
 And all thy genius, all thy fort of mind,  
 Were to this point, this single point confin'd.  
 Ev'n now, perhaps APPICIUS sighs below,  
 He had not liv'd *Threadneedle-street* to know,

Might

But tho' beef-steakes, and York, or Burton ale,  
 Might ev'n the fire of gods and men regale,  
 Could Jove with dignity Olympus quit,  
 And deign t' associate with a modern cit,  
 Without variety—beef-steaks will cloy,  
 As every repetition palls our joy.  
 To change the scene, and all her arts display,  
 The Muse through Bishopsgate directs her way:  
 Stops at the *Bull*, and warmly recommends  
 This frugal house to all her frugal friends,  
 Where every day with decency you dine  
 On two good dishes and a pint of wine.

Still as we press along the eastern road,  
*White-chapel* shews us *Kenton's* late abode;  
 Where if good eating and *best* porter can  
 Excite our praise to chronicle the man;  
 His celebrated name bids fair to stand,  
 Whilst English liquor 's quaff'd on English land.  
 Nor London singly can his porter boast,  
 Alike 'tis fam'd on every foreign coast,  
 For this the Frenchman leaves his Bourdeaux wine,  
 And pours libations at our Thames's shrine.

Afric retails it 'mongst her swarthy sons,  
 And haughty Spain procures it for her Dons.  
 Wherever Britain's powerful flag has flown,  
 There London's celebrated *porter's* known.

Let's change now crouded streets and city air,  
 For the less busy walks, and opening square ;  
 Those western walks—where not an art's untry'd.  
 To sacrifice to vanity and pride ;  
 Where *Cambell's*, *Wood's*, and *Stacey's* pow'rful skill,  
 The season's turn obedient to their will.  
 But we, whom Fortune, from her niggard gift,  
 Hath early forc'd upon a life of thrift.  
 Should more attentive fly from such parade,  
 Nor ask the wants which luxury hath made.

Facing that street\* where Venus holds her reign,  
 And *Pleasure's* daughters drag a life of *pain* ;  
 There the *Spread-eagle*, with majestic grace,  
 Shews his broad wings, and notifies the place.

\* Catharine-street in the Strand.



Unerring Prudence, as I westward stray,  
 Let thy instructions point me out this way,  
 Fre'd, or from dissipation, or from riot,  
 Here let me dine in plenty and in quiet.

When business—or when pleasure interferes,  
 (For each has its appointments, and its cares)  
 Oft for convenience would we wish to chuse  
 Some house adapted for the present use ;  
 Where disencumber'd of all form or shew,  
 We to a moment might, or sit or go ;  
 Eat what the palate recommends as best,  
 Yet not consider'd as an useless guest.  
 Attentive Prudence, who alike purveys  
 Both for dispatch, and for the hour of ease,  
 Points to the Dog\*, where, in the strictest sense.  
 We're serv'd with decency at small expence.

Here too the waiter ne'er directs your choice,  
 (Absorb'd in hurry, and promiscuous noise)

\* The Dog in Holywell-street.

How shall he know, with what distinction trace,  
 The several orders of each different face?  
 Let, as you pass, the larder catch your eye,  
 And from this store your appetite supply;  
 Hence shall the *Master* know your bill of fare,  
 And hence shall haste remunerate your care.  
 Through life, my pupil, let this maxim teach,  
 (And use it always when within your reach ;)  
 Or in your friend's concern, or in your own,  
 Address the principal, and *him* alone,

Yet in this place, tho' thrift precede the way,  
 If guarded not we may be led astray ;  
 For, oh ! how oft the appetite is try'd,  
 When early vegetables first are cry'd !  
 Rang'd round the bar, in verdant groups they lie,  
 As tempting baits to catch the passing eye ;  
 Here cucumbers, with peas and beans appear,  
 And all the forward produce of the year ;  
 But these avoid——else, by magnific skill,  
 They'll stand against you in th' approaching bill.

Say

Say,—when th' inconstant stomach's not in tune  
 To celebrate her usual meal at noon,  
 Caught from, perhaps, transgressing sober laws,  
 Or rising late, or some such trivial cause,  
 (For oft e'en physic's at a loss to name  
 The nicer incidents that hurt our frame)  
 Why then should custom generate expence,  
 Or trespass on th' establish'd laws of sense?  
 Let a good soup, these days your dinner be;  
 Your health 'twill serve—'twill serve frugality,  
 And a mere trifle furnish such a meal,  
 As luxury, with all her art, must fail,

Here rest a while, nor indiscreetly stray  
 Where *Giles's* ruins mark the broaden'd way;  
 Where, for what end, most obviously appears,  
 The knives are chain'd, and ladder forms the stairs;  
 Or to *Moorfields*, where wretched paupers ply  
 Round clothless tables in an open sky.  
 Do thou no more than what is useful glean,  
 Nor search the foul recesses of the mean;

Nor



Nor ideot like, unwittingly proceed  
 T' instruct in metre those who cannot read:  
 Enough, already, has thy pen describ'd  
 Of what's consistent with an honest pride;  
 Be such sufficient for thy sons to chuse,  
 Nor risque the censure of an ill-bred muse.

## B O O K II.

EXPERIENC'D grown, nor subject now to change

Again, my pupil let's together range,  
 From all the vices of the evening fly,  
 Nor once turn on them with a wishful eye.  
 Let Bibbo ev'ry joy in drinking place,  
 And Ranger wanton in the lewd embrace;  
 Here not a gleam of real pleasure's found;  
 Langour, and pain, these levities surround.  
 Let us, more happy, more securely stray  
 Where faultless Prudence points us out the way,  
 To some known coffee-house; there unbend the mind,  
 In reading prints—or studying human kind.

Here, o'er our evening's lemonade, or tea,  
 We glean the little novel of the day,  
 Know, from the press, what schemes the world engage,  
 (By turns a wife, and dissipated age)

The

The politician's plans, the sharper's cheat,  
 And all the bustling of the small and great.  
 Hail, happy country! that can thus disclose  
 Thy inmost secrets to thy deadliest foes;  
 Yet still secure, the varied joys pursue,  
 Nor fear what all those deadliest foes can do.

But if 'tis summer, and the ev'ning fair,  
 Miss not th' advantage of the fragrant air;  
 The different outlets all invite the choice,  
 Where Nature calls thee with resistless voice;  
 Chelsea, whose hospital speaks Britain's praise;  
 And pleasant Knightsbridge, garrison of *Bayes*;  
 Or Kensington, whose royal gardens claim  
 A taste magnific as their founder's \* name;  
 Or Bagnigge, famous for it's motley crew  
 Of sprightly damsels—pleasurable Jew;  
 Or that once celebrated, small retreat,  
 Where Cromwell † liv'd, tyrannically great;  
 Oh! sad reverse of sublunary things,  
 This house, which once contain'd the dread of kings,

\* King William III.

† Cromwell's Gardens.



Who made three mighty realms, with awe, obey,  
Now fells—(inglorious change!)—a dish of tea.

Here, leaving City-smoak and noise behind,  
At ease indulge the wand'rings of the mind  
With verdant prospects, as they round you lie,  
Or warm your heart, or entertain your eye;  
For boundless Nature, never at a stand,  
Scatters her blessings with an equal hand;  
The peasant shares them, while he tills the soil,  
The Cit partakes them in recess from toil.

'Tis night—the deep'ning shadows intervene,  
And all things indicate a sable scene.  
Now drunken coachmen, free from ev'ry care,  
Nod on their boxes, and neglect their fare;  
(Ah! thoughtless herd—why will you not refrain,  
Nor let the frequent dram preclude your gain?)  
The hapless housewife, and the antique maid,  
Join now to seek the fortune-teller's aid;  
Their lofty garrets Drury's nymphs forsake;  
Down the dark alley pants the batter'd rake:

D

The

The drowfy watchman hobbles to his stand,  
 Prepar'd to free the thief who gilds his hand.

Esstrang'd from every spark of true delight,  
 Now gamesters meet to celebrate the night :  
 Not in that cheerful, and convivial style,  
 Where every sprightly face assumes a smile ;  
 Where the loud laugh, and merry tale go round,  
 And nought but peace, and innocence are found :  
 Far other thoughts their rankling minds employ ;  
 Rapine, and dissipation form their joy.  
 Oh ! that the Muse, (if wishing were of use)  
 Could to one man this prowling band reduce ;  
 Then place the sword of Justice in her hand,  
 That at one blow she might relieve the land ;  
 That at one blow she might her vengeance find,  
 In rooting out those robbers of mankind.

I know that many, from their means being small,  
 Each mode will practise—sometimes risque their all ;  
 Hoping that Fortune, at some lucky cast,  
 Ceasing to persecute, will smile at last.

But,

But very vain these hopes—the gambling tribe,  
 Conscious, connected share the golden bribe ;  
 Win, flatter, lose, just as they find it best,  
 And of your suff'rings only make a jest.

Before a glass, as diffident to win,  
 Sometimes they strive to chuck a shilling in ;  
 Oft from the circling edges will it fly,  
 (Its fate appearing doubtful as the dye,)  
 'Till one, untaught, unpractis'd in the rule  
 Which sharpers hourly use to gull the fool ;  
 A bet proposes—instantly it bounds,  
 And the pent silver in the glass resounds.

The better fort—(I mean the affluent tribe,  
 For how can *good*, a gambler's name describe ?)  
 At various hazard, games will often ply,  
 Where all seems equal under Chance's eye ;  
 Yet, here the shuffle, and the cog's display'd,  
 And all the mysteries of Breslaw's\* trade ;

\* Breslaw the Jugler.



Here unreveal'd to all but sharper's eyes,  
They rob, they plunder, under friendship's guise.

Such are the baits with which these anglers play,  
And such the genius of the gambling way,  
With many more, as vicious as they're low,  
'Which the Muse knows not, nor would wish to know:'  
For where's that vice, how whimsically new,  
Those wretches don't unceasingly pursue?  
Or where's that habit innocence can lend,  
But they assume to serve some private end?

Enough, my Muse, of the abandon'd theme.  
Nor further on their villanies declaim;  
Sick of such views—let's just their fate explore,  
'Then ask who'd be this hateful monster more?  
Look through their hapless lives from first to end,  
Where is the *gamester* ever was a friend?  
Where the good husband, or the parent made?  
'Their hearts grow callous from their wretched trade;  
Dead to all finer feelings of the mind,  
'They have no feelings, but to fleece mankind;

Strangers

Strangers to peace, to happiness, and quiet,  
They know no joys, but infamy, and riot.

As through the streets, oh! Virtue, as I go,  
Shield me from one that's equally my foe;  
Who cap-a-pee, like Hamlet's ghost now stalks,  
And makes "night hideous"—by her nightly walks.  
How can the Muse without a sigh proclaim,  
And tell, that *Woman* is this monster's name;  
Woman, man's chiefest good, by Heaven design'd  
To glad the heart, and humanize the mind;  
To sooth each angry care, abate each strife,  
And lull the passions as we walk through life:  
But fallen from such a height, so very low,  
She now has nothing but her form to show;  
A scandal to that sex she was before;  
Each grace polluted by the name of w——e.

How shall I speak of all the various arts  
She nightly uses to entrap our hearts?  
How shall I paint the loose familiar airs,  
Affected speeches, and immodest leers,

Of all the midnight daughters as they stand,  
 In shameless groupes, along the lengthen'd Strand!  
 Lost to all thought—remote from every sense  
 Of female decency, or innocence;  
 Disrob'd of all restraint, or modest port,  
 Here PROSTITUTION holds her public court.

Whith flaunting strides, and affectation's eye,  
 Behold those sycophants in love pass by ;  
 (Ah, how unlike that modest, gentle air,  
 The true criterion of the virtuous fair !)  
 In well-feign'd accents, now they hail the ear,  
 " My life, my love, my charmer, or, my dear."  
 As if these sounds, these joyless sounds, could prove  
 The smallest particle of genuine love.  
 O! purchas'd love, retail'd through all the town,  
 Where each may share, on paying half-a-crown ;  
 Where every air of tenderness is art,  
 And not one word the language of the heart ;  
 Where all this mockery of Cupid's reign,  
 Ends in remorse, in wretchedness, and pain.

For



For shame Police, at such a dangerous time,  
 Where is *your* rod to castigate this crime?  
 Shall Britain, fam'd for excellence of laws,  
 The first to plead in every injur'd cause;  
 Who deals out justice, with a hand so even,  
 She seems the fav'rite delegate of Heaven;  
 Say——shall this spot thus derogate her fame,  
 And throw so foul a blemish on her name?  
 Arm! Arm! ye Ministers of justice, arm!  
 And save Britannia's youth from so much harm:  
 Save! Save her Virgins too, from such a life!  
 And change the epithet of W—e, for wife.  
 Let that dear name, synonymous with joy,  
 Which Heaven, alone, bestow'd without alloy;  
 No more be made of ridicule the stroke,  
 Or food for fatyr, or a blockhead's joke.  
 Use not a futile argument oft urg'd,  
 “The vice is grown so great it can't be purg'd;”  
 And thence remissly ev'ry rein let loose.  
 Form'd to repel so flagrant an abuse.

The Muse, indeed, in such a thoughtless age,  
 When Prostitution seems *reserv'd* to rage,  
 With candour owns, to weed it from the land,  
 Requires, perhaps, a more than mortal hand.  
 But, shall the malady that can't be cur'd,  
 No lenitives receive to be endur'd?  
 Say—shall this baneful **Hydra** of the night,  
 Raise, every hour, its head before our sight?  
 Must it stalk, *publicly*, along each place?  
 Shame to all order! scandal to all grace!  
 No—since ye can't with every art o'erthrow,  
 Nor *wholly* crush this epidemic foe;  
 Dismiss it instant to some single street\*,  
 Where it can ne'er a purer object meet:  
 Where it can have no other intercourse,  
 There let it spend its vitiating force.  
 Let the base tenants of this wretched place,  
 Have proper emblems of their just disgrace,  
 That at one view all may distinctly see,  
 'Twixt vice and virtue, the extreme degree.

\* The good effects of which institution are experienced in several parts of Italy and Holland,

Hence

Hence every youth a much less risque shall run,  
 And hence less thoughtless virgins be undone;  
 Hence, foreigners, no more the tale shall tell,  
 How lewdness in our streets and alleys dwell;  
 No more beset with every nightly train,  
 (These apes of love and harbingers of pain;)   
 Our sex shall walk, nor like Palæmon prove,  
 The bitter produce of illegal love.

Pælemon was with every grace possest,  
 Alike in friendship and in love was blest;  
 Happy, as easy fortune could impart,  
 But happier much in his lov'd Myra's heart.  
 Myra, whose charms a monarch's throne might grace,  
 Whose form was lovely, as her matchless face;  
 With such a perfect—such a gentle soul,  
 As held each passion subject to controul;  
 Their loves, their cares, for ever did they blend,  
 Each was the dotard, and each was the friend:  
 One common interest occupied each mind,  
 Their only contest—who should be most kind.



One night Palæmon, happy 'mongst his friends,  
 (For who more fitted for convivial ends)  
 Whether to reason, with a taste refin'd,  
 And shew the various qualities of mind;  
 Or shape the tale, or sing with sprightly glee,  
 Or charm with wit, and friendly repartee.  
 This fatal night by too much friendship warm'd,  
 (Mistaken name, with every mischief arm'd)  
 He listen'd to the voice of mirth too long,  
 And drank too deeply 'midst his joyous throng:  
 Discretion, which o'er all his actions reign'd,  
 And every consequence at large explain'd,  
 Was now dismiss'd,—or proudly thrown aside,  
 Whilst Whim and Folly undertook to guide.

Companion'd thus, Palæmon sallies forth,  
 Without the usual guardian of his worth;  
 His heart expanded, every passion high,  
 Noise in his voice, intemp'rance in his eye:  
 A stagg'ring gait, and each exterior sign,  
 That picture reason, when absorb'd in wine;

Awhile

Awhile he ponder'd on his much lov'd home,  
 And nodding reason whisper'd—"not to roam."  
 But lust and wine, more pow'rful rivals far,  
 Now in his bosom wage united war;  
 'Till lost to every thought of Myra's charms,  
 He fell a victim in a harlot's arms.  
 Oh! hapless Myra—how can words explain  
 Thy every terror and thy every pain?  
 How must it pierce humanity to hear  
 The pointed feelings which thy soul must bear,  
 As every tedious, painful hour's delay,  
 Proclaim'd the night's advances to the day,  
 Thinking each loitering moment, as it past,  
 Would bring the wanderer home, and be the last.

The last indeed it was for thy repose,  
 For from this night what numerous ills arose!  
 What, tho' his presence, wak'd thy every joy,  
 Too soon it brought its virulent alloy:  
 That colour which bespoke nor ill, nor pain,  
 (Emblem of health and all her jocund train)

Is now exchang'd for all those pallid hues,  
 (Abominable ensigns of the Stews.)  
 The roses too that flush'd in Myra's face,  
 Which spoke such native innocence and grace,  
 Mark'd out each feature with such just design,  
 And made the human so approach divine;  
 Ting'd by infection, by degrees grew pale,  
 And loudly told the melancholy tale.

Where are those days, those happy halycon days,  
 That fill'd thy heart; Palæmon, with such ease,  
 That every hour thou could'st so well employ,  
 Without one point of interrupted joy?  
 Alas! they're fled!—surrounded now with care,  
 And ev'ry funeral minister of despair,  
 He sits, revolving o'er what he must prove [love..  
 From that damn'd hour, in which he swerv'd from

Sedans and coaches rattle now around,  
 To Drury-lane—or Covent-Garden bound;  
 From either end, from City and from Court,  
 In thronging multitudes they here resort;

Shower'd



Shower'd o'er with powder, and bedaub'd with lace,  
 My Lord just issues from St. *James's-Place*,  
 To murder time, or massacre the spleen,  
 To loll—to chatter—see or to be seen;  
 Here too the Cit—to calm domestic strife,  
 Smirks in the chariot by his half-pleas'd wife;  
 (That wife, whose soul's on public places bent,  
 That Cit, who doats on nought but *cent. per cent.*)  
 But other interests let thy mind engage,  
 And draw supplies of knowledge from the stage.  
 Oh! well wrought science, happily design'd,  
 To please the sense and humanize the mind;  
 In which mankind, as in a mirror, see,  
 What they have been, and what they ought to be.

See Heaven taught *Shakespeare*, in the front appears,  
 (The brightest gem dramatic genius wears)  
 Adorn'd with all that nature can bestow,  
 He gives each heart the sympathetic glow;  
 Led by her clue, he walks through all her round,  
 And shews her secrets on theatric ground;

Laughs,

Laughs, where she laughs—but when to grief inclin'd,  
 Melts every passion of the human mind.  
 Oh! how shall words, immortal bard, display  
 The warbling sweetness of thy woodland lay?  
 Thy notes have reach'd such heights unknown before,  
 That praise grows giddy, when she would explore.

Otway, and Rowe, in their pathetic page,  
 By turns have warm'd, and taught a vicious age;  
 What virgin can Monimia's fate bemoan,  
 But must, with double caution guard her own?  
 Or where's th' impassion'd youth, who thinks at all,  
 But sees Lothario unlamented fall?

Endu'd with wit, with mimicry and song,  
 The comic muse associates in the throng;  
 Upheld by Congreve, Cibber, Steele, and Gay,  
 She laughs and chaces every care away;  
 The rod, or wreath, alternately does use,  
 Now a satyric, now a soothing muse;  
 Dispensing humour, when dispensing smart,  
 And, whilst she freely probes, corrects the heart.

Nor

Nor think the price you dissipate on plays,  
 Incurs the censure of these frugal lays;  
 Full well 'tis known, without some point of joy,  
 The wearied mind's too often apt to cloy,  
 And wants some intervention to amuse—  
 What then so fit as the theatric muse;  
 Where, from her scenes, the breast is taught to glow,  
 And catch the pow'rful luxury of woe?

At other times, when gloomy thoughts take birth;  
 Then should we chuse to sacrifice to mirth;  
 Push back th' intruding moment of our care,  
 And to some noted Porter-house repair.  
 The several streets, or one or more can claim,  
 Alike in goodness, and alike in fame;  
 The Strand, her *Spreading-eagle* justly boasts,  
 And Maiden-lane exhibits her *Blue-posts*:  
 Nor think the *Cock* with these not on a par,  
 The celebrated *Cock* of Temple-bar,  
 Whose Porter best of all bespeaks its praise—  
 Porter that's worthy of the Poet's lays.

From



From such like places often will you find  
 A cheap resource to entertain the mind ;  
 To laugh at folly—from defects grown wise,  
 “ And catch the manners living, as they rise.”

Here the snug Cit, each night involv'd in smoke,  
 By turns, or tells his tale, or cracks his joke ;  
 Now on the *Colonies* profoundly treats,  
 And, from the daily prints, at large repeats :  
 Or, with a down-cast face, and plodding eye,  
 He shews the cause provisions are so high ;  
 Gives that opinion which protects his trade,  
 Then wonders how imperfect laws are made.

With recent feats of heroism fir'd,  
 A son of Mars, see from the wars retir'd.  
 Now he expatiates over battles won,  
 Of plunder'd provinces, and towns undone,  
 In his spill'd porter, martial lines advance  
 'Gainst the united pow'rs of Spain and France ;  
 Here such a wing the brunt of battle bore ;  
 And here a squadron welt'ring in its gore.

Or

Or, if his honour should a siege describe,  
 And all the hardships of the warring tribe;  
 With bread and cheese, a parapet he rears,  
 Whilst broken pipe-stems cannonade by tiers.  
 What different modes the lawyer takes to please!  
 He fights his battles o'er, with much more ease:  
 His cannon's, parchment; and his sword—a pen  
 Drawn against general property—not men;  
 Mark him with what significance of face,  
 He tells each story—as he states a case;  
 Now he demurs—or now he backs a cause,  
 And seems a mere epitome of laws.

But see, in yonder box, where sits apart  
 One, whose deportment marks an honest heart,  
 Whose eyes the feeling of his soul express—  
 Alas; 'tis MERIT, in a thread-bare dress:  
 He seems, as if revolving in his mind,  
 On better days which time has thrown behind;  
 Perhaps just parted from a much lov'd wife,  
 From whence sprang every comfort of his life,

F

Whose

Whose eye ne'er met him with a distant air,  
 But shar'd each transport, as she sooth'd each care ;  
 Or what still more might aggravate the case,  
 He left behind a little prating race,  
 As yet unnurs'd, untaught in wisdom's page,  
 Open to all the vices of the age,  
 Whilst he unfriended breaths a foreign air,  
 Haunted by every Dæmon of despair.  
 Oh ! what avails thy every excellence,  
 To please with humour, and prevail with sense ;  
 Thy various powers to serve each social end  
 Of father, husband, counsellor, and friend :  
 Thy perverse stars of a malignant kind  
 Mar every honest purpose of thy mind !  
 So many a work of nature finely wrought,  
 As if by every finished force of thought,  
 Unstoried and unfung, neglected lies  
 A spectacle alone for vulgar eyes.

And now the Muse,—(abstracted from renown,)

Hath fearless trod the mazes of the town ;

Explain'd



Explain'd with all, yet with her little art,  
 Some modes to *live*, and some to guard the heart.  
 O ye associate frugals ! O my friends !  
 Ev'n on this state what happiness depends ?  
 What tho' thy fortunes interdict to go  
 The sprightly rounds of *Almack's* and *Soho* ;  
 What tho', regardless of such dear bought fame,  
 The *Rose* and *Shakespeare* never knew thy name,  
 Yet still thou can'st thy landlord's threats defy,  
 Nor mind the lounging bailiff's watchful eye ;  
 Walk where you please, regardless to be met,  
 Free from those painful miseries of debt.

Long has the view'd, in this alluring place,  
 Where Luxury receives each polish'd grace,  
 Where force of fashion glare of vice unite,  
 To rouse the sense and captivate the sight ;  
 Where Pleasure spreads her every filken charm,  
 The gay to lull—th' insensible to warm,  
 What crowds, on such a sea of folly tost,  
 Before they come to think, are daily lost !

As some prevention then, she this bestows,  
And freely gives advice on what she knows ;  
By it she courts no tribute of applause,  
But that of writing in a public cause;  
Conscious of this, looks for no other fame,  
Alike indifferent, or to praise or blame.

F I N I S.